

Week Ending Friday, October 25, 1996

**Remarks Prior to Discussions With
Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri of
Lebanon and an Exchange With
Reporters**

October 18, 1996

Meeting With Prime Minister Hariri

The President. Let me say first that I'm delighted to have the Prime Minister here today. The United States is strongly committed to the independence, the sovereignty, the territorial integrity of Lebanon. We look forward to supporting a comprehensive and lasting peace in the Middle East that preserves that integrity and a Lebanon that is free of foreign forces. We're also committed to supporting the reconstruction efforts that are so important in Lebanon after the difficulties of the last year. And I look forward to this conversation.

I should also say in front of the American press that the United States is very blessed by the contributions of large numbers of Lebanese-Americans, including members of our administration: Donna Shalala, the Secretary of Health and Human Services; former Senator George Mitchell, who is now back in Northern Ireland or on his way back; and General George Joulwan, who is the commander of our forces in Europe. So we have a lot of ties with Lebanon, and we're looking forward to this meeting.

1996 Election

Q. Mr. President, speaking of contributions, what is your reaction today to Senator Dole's charge that when it comes to some of these foreign political cash contributions made to the DNC, that you personally haven't learned the lesson of that national nightmare called Watergate?

The President. Well, let me say two things. One—first is, Mr. Panetta and I have asked the DNC to review all the contributions, as we should have, as we've said, to make sure they were appropriate. And we'll

have other opportunities to discuss this. This is not the appropriate forum for that.

U.S. Military Aid to Lebanon

Q. Mr. President, the Lebanese Government has asked the United States for various pieces of military equipment, including tanks—excuse me—helicopters or personnel carriers' aircraft. Do you view their request sympathetically, and if so, what would you expect to give them?

The President. Well, the Prime Minister and I haven't had our meeting yet, and the Secretary of State and he have discussed this. We'll review these things and see what is appropriate and make the appropriate decision. But we have been and continue to be very supportive of Lebanon and of the work that the Prime Minister is doing to strengthen his country and to give it a brighter future.

Q. Do they need more hardware to guarantee their territorial integrity?

The President. I don't have any other comment at this time.

1996 Election

Q. Are you going to let Senator Dole take California?

The President. The people of California will determine that.

Q. What was going to be your first answer?
[Laughter]

The President. It belongs to them.

[At this point, one group of reporters left the room, and another group entered.]

Meeting With Prime Minister Hariri

The President. First of all, let me say that it is a great honor to welcome the Prime Minister back to the United States and especially to have him here at the White House. The United States strongly supports the independence, the sovereignty, the territorial integrity of Lebanon. And we look forward to working with the Prime Minister to build a future in the Middle East with a comprehen-

sive, lasting peace and Lebanon free of foreign forces. We also want to be supportive of the reconstruction efforts in Lebanon, and I'm looking forward to having a discussion with the Prime Minister about that.

The other thing I feel I should say to the people of Lebanon is how deeply indebted the United States is for the contributions of Lebanese-Americans. My administration is especially indebted because of the presence of Donna Shalala in our Cabinet as Secretary of Health and Human Services, and former Senator George Mitchell, who is our envoy to the peace talks in Northern Ireland and who is leading them now, and General George Joulwan, who is the commander of all of our forces in Europe. So we have a lot of ties with Lebanon. We want to be as supportive of this Prime Minister in his vision for Lebanon's future, and I look forward to our discussions.

Mr. Prime Minister, do you want to say anything?

Prime Minister Hariri. Thank you very much, Mr. President. I am really honored and pleased to be here and to meet with President Clinton and Mr. Christopher. And I'm confident that President Clinton will help Lebanon in the next future to—and assist them to regain its independence and also will help them in the reconstruction effort.

Q. Mr. President, can we expect any change in the—

Q. [*Inaudible*]*—is there any way—[inaudible]—*

Q. *—status of the travel ban on Lebanon anytime soon?*

The President. Well, we're going to—I'm going to discuss that with the Prime Minister. As you know, we do have numerous people from this country coming to Lebanon, and our concerns relate to the security. And we may be able to work together on that, and we're going to discuss that.

U.S. Sanctions on Lebanon

Q. Mr. President, is there any way you can separate between those restrictions imposed on Lebanon—the safety of Americans who wish to travel to Lebanon and those who are cut out, hurting the Lebanese economy and the efforts of the families to rebuild the country?

The President. We're going to talk about that. We want to be—we want to be supportive of the Prime Minister's efforts. And we believe that there is a special need for people who support freedom and independence in the future of Lebanon all over the world to help in the reconstruction efforts.

Q. Elections are next month—

Middle East Peace Process

Q. Mr. President, what can be done to make sure that there is no repetition of aggression on the Lebanese villages now that the humanitarian group found that Israel was really the aggressor?

The President. Well, I think the first and most important thing is to make sure that Lebanon is a genuine partner in the ongoing process of peace discussions in the Middle East and to get the reconstruction efforts going. If we do it in the right way, I think there will not be a repetition.

Q. Mr. President—

The President. One more, one more.

Q. Yes, Mr. President, about the Syria-Israeli negotiations and the Palestinian negotiations, they have been stalled for a long time. What is the United States prepared to do to move these negotiations ahead? And—we can do that with the Israeli position on the commitments that they already made to the Palestinians?

The President. Well, let me say, I think that, as a practical matter, the whole peace process needs to show some movement again before you can expect much to happen on the Lebanese front. There has been—there have been discussions; the Secretary of State has been to the region many, many times, and the United States is always concerned about the position of Lebanon.

And let me say, I'm somewhat encouraged by the progress of the recent talks, the current ongoing talks with the Palestinians and the Israelis. If we can get the whole thing moving again, that's the best thing for Lebanon. We're working on it.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:40 p.m. in the Residence at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

**Message on the Observance of the
Anniversary of the Terrorist Attack
in Beirut, Lebanon**

October 18, 1996

Thirteen years ago, as dawn was breaking in Beirut, Lebanon, a suicide-bomber drove a truck filled with explosives into a compound that housed American Marines. More than 240 Americans were killed by this single act of hatred. Almost simultaneously, a similar assault claimed the lives of dozens of French soldiers.

Now, in this place of repose and respect, representatives from over thirty nations join to honor these victims and all the others around the world who have lost their lives at the hands of terrorists. We remember the passengers of Pan Am Flight 103, whose journey ended in the skies over Lockerbie, Scotland. We remember the victims of the World Trade Center bombing, and the 168 innocent people—among them helpless children—who were murdered in Oklahoma City. We remember those Americans in Riyadh and Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, who gave their lives in service to our nation. And we remember those murdered on the streets of Tel Aviv, or poisoned in the Tokyo subway, or killed by a car bomb on Canary Wharf in London, or assaulted on an Army base near Belfast, and so many others who have suffered the pain and outrage of a terrorist attack.

This remembrance ceremony is a fitting tribute to the victims of terrorism worldwide, and I want to thank Carmella LaSpada and the “No Greater Love” organization for their steadfast commitment to honor and remember those victims, as well as the brave men and women who have died in service to America. For all the positive advances of our time, the threat of terrorism looms larger in a world grown ever closer. That is why we must work together with other nations more than ever to prevent terrorists from acting and to capture them if they do. And we are doing just that.

But just as important as the strength of our policies is the strength of our spirit. To the family members gathered at Arlington National Cemetery, I know that no words can comfort you for the loss of your loved ones.

The passage of time will never erode the place they hold in your hearts. But let us move beyond our sorrow and anger to find joy in the memories of those we honor here. Let us give thanks for the lives they lived, find inspiration in all they achieved, and together strive to realize the shining dreams they left behind. Let us unite the community of civilized nations to stand up for freedom and stand against the scourge of terrorist violence.

Bill Clinton

NOTE: This message was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 18 but was not issued as a White House press release. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

The President’s Radio Address

October 19, 1996

Good morning. Today I want to talk to you about how we can demand responsibility from all our young people by taking firm steps to stop teens from driving under the influence of alcohol and drugs.

My vision is of an America where we offer opportunity to all, demand responsibility from all, and build a stronger community where everyone has a place. That’s America’s basic bargain. That’s how we will keep our young people safe and give them the futures they deserve.

We’ve done a lot to expand opportunity for our young people: reducing the cost of college loans and improving the terms for repayment, expanding scholarships to college, creating millions of new jobs. We’ve preserved the summer jobs program and created AmeriCorps, which gives young people the opportunity to serve in their communities and earn money for college. I want to do more.

Our balanced budget plan can make 2 years of college after high school as universal as a high school diploma is today by giving people a deduction on their taxes, dollar-for-dollar, for the cost of the typical community college tuition. We offer a deduction of up to \$10,000 a year for any college tuition and permit families to save in an IRA and then